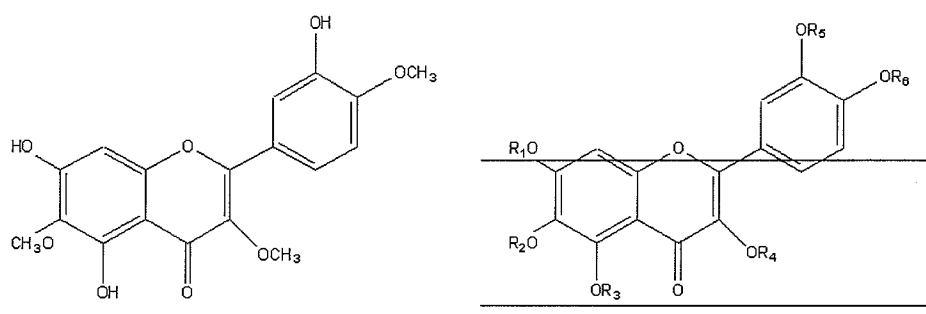


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently amended) A method for inhibiting elongation of melanocytic dendrites comprising:

a step of applying ~~Centaureidina compound~~ represented by the following ~~general~~ formula (1) and/or a salt thereof to the skin of an individual in need thereof, whereby elongation of melanocytic dendrites is inhibited:



formula (1)

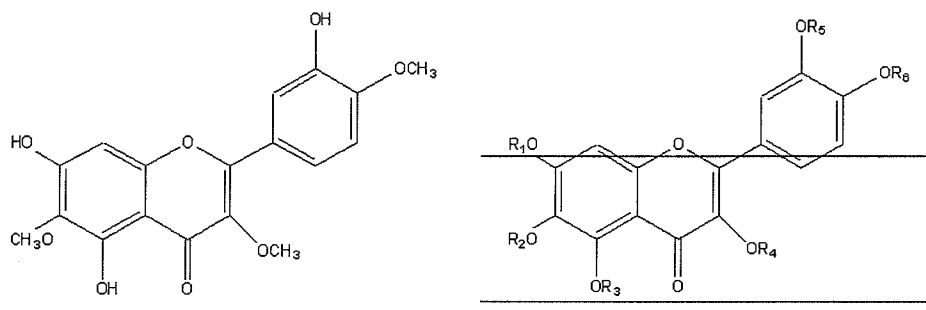
wherein ~~R₁, R₂, R₃, R₄, R₅, and R₆~~ each independently represent a hydrogen atom or a C₁₋₄ alkyl group.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently amended) The method for inhibiting elongation of melanocytic dendrites according to claim 7 ~~or 8~~, wherein the skin has dyschromatosis on which tyrosinase inhibitors have insufficient effect.

10-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently amended) A method for inhibiting elongation of melanocytic dendrites comprising applying a skin preparation for external use comprising 0.005 to 5% by weight of Centaureidina compound represented by the following ~~general formula (1)~~ and/or a salt thereof to an individual in need thereof, whereby elongation of melanocytic dendrites is inhibited:



formula (1)

wherein ~~R₁, R₂, R₃, R₄, R₅, and R₆~~ each independently represent a hydrogen atom or a C₁-₄ alkyl group.

13. (Previously presented) The method for inhibiting elongation of melanocytic dendrites according to claim 12, wherein the skin preparation for external use is a cosmetic.